

Called to Collaboration: The University Consortium for Catholic Education

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This article describes the University Consortium for Catholic Education (UCCE) as an example of collaboration between Catholic colleges, universities, schools, and other stakeholders. The UCCE supports a collaborative cadre of primarily Catholic colleges and universities as they design and implement graduate-level teaching service programs for the purpose of supporting K-12 Catholic education in the United States. The article provides a brief introduction to the work of the consortium and analyzes its impact through the lens of Archbishop Michael Miller's (2006) five benchmarks of truly Catholic schools. The authors collected data and testimony from UCCE program directors, current participants, and alumni to describe the consortium's model for Catholic teacher preparation, to demonstrate the centrality of collaboration for the success of a program, and to testify to the impact of programs on participants and Catholic colleges and schools.

Archbishop Michael Miller's book (2006), *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, examines the history of Church teaching on Catholic education, organizing this information according to five necessary features of a Catholic school.

Like the Marks of the Church proclaimed in the Creed...so, too, does the Holy See identify the principal features of a school as Catholic: a Catholic school should be *inspired by a supernatural vision, founded on a Christian anthropology, animated by communion and community, imbued with a Catholic worldview throughout its curriculum, and sustained by Gospel witness* [italics added]. (p. 17)

Miller asserts that positive witness of these benchmarks answers the critical question of whether or not a school is regarded as Catholic in the mind of the Church. The University Consortium for Catholic Education (UCCE) can be analyzed according to Archbishop Miller's benchmarks in order to provide

evidence how, through collaboration and a holistic model of teacher education, the consortium responds to the call of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB, 2005) to support Catholic schools.

This article asserts that the UCCE is a successful and unique model of Catholic educator formation that is rooted in our identity as a Church. To offer evidence for this claim, we will discuss the mission of the UCCE as one of collaboration, bringing Catholic colleges and universities together with (arch)dioceses, Catholic schools, donors and grantors, and new Catholic educators and their students. We will then examine the impact of the UCCE and analyze its work according to the five benchmarks of truly Catholic schools set forth by Archbishop Michael Miller (2006) in his summary of Vatican teaching on Catholic education to demonstrate the effectiveness of the UCCE model in working toward the goal of preparing Catholic educators. Finally, we will discuss current challenges and future directions for growth of the UCCE, and suggest directions for research about its graduates and participants.

About the UCCE

Credit for beginning the UCCE movement belongs to the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) program. The ACE program was founded in 1993 through the vision of Rev. Timothy R. Scully, C.S.C., and Rev. Sean D. McGraw, C.S.C. With much initial success in its early years, the ACE program decided in 1999 not to expand its program beyond the current size and instead applied for and received funding to replicate the ACE model at Seton Hall University, the University of Portland (where initial ACE cohorts received their teacher education), Valparaiso University, Loyola Marymount University, and Providence College (Smith, 2007). These programs, along with the Urban Catholic Teacher Corps (UCTC) of Boston College and the Archdiocese of Boston, which was already operating independently, came together to form the initial group of Catholic service teaching programs that would become the UCCE.

The UCCE participants are college graduates who commit to 2 years of teaching in a Catholic school while living in intentional Christian community and pursuing educational and spiritual development to become Catholic educators. Three pillars of community, education/professional development, and spirituality are what unite and sustain all UCCE programs. While each pillar is distinct and important in its own right, the three have a synergetic effect on Catholic teacher formation. Because UCCE programs are an extension of the mission and work of the sponsoring college or university, this

national collaboration represents and sustains a movement in Catholic higher education today. The effects speak highly for the positive results that can be achieved through university, (arch)diocesan, and K-12 collaboration.

The UCCE is comprised of 15 member programs serving in 26 (arch)dioceses across the country. Current UCCE member program information is listed in Table 1. For a brief description of each program and historical overview of the formation of programs within the UCCE, see Smith's article published in 2007. Since 2007, the UCCE membership has grown with the addition of the GRACE Program at the University of St. Thomas and the Remick Fellowship Program at St. Mary's University of Minnesota. The GRACE program is a joint partnership between the University of St. Thomas in Houston and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, housed within the University of St. Thomas School of Education. This program aims to provide a program of study that integrates current educational research and practice and draws inspiration from the traditions of Catholic education, including the Basilian Fathers who founded the university. Though the program has been running for the past decade, the Remick Fellowship of Saint Mary's of Minnesota joined the UCCE in the summer of 2007. The Remick Fellowship offers an opportunity to acquire a master of arts in instruction and Minnesota state licensure for those with a wide variety of undergraduate backgrounds. The program is also uniquely partnered with the NativityMiguel Network of Schools so that Remick Fellowship participants serve in NativityMiguel middle schools.

A Mission of Collaboration

The UCCE forms laity, dominantly young adults who recently completed bachelor's degrees, in the apostolate of Catholic education. Lay men and women, through their baptisms, share in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of the Church; their vocation is to "seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs" (Vatican Council II, 1964, p. 31). UCCE programs offer a unique formation opportunity for college graduates to explore their "supernatural vocation" as lay people in the apostolate of Catholic education, committed to living in intentional Christian communities, and to their own spiritual development as disciples of Christ in the world (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 37). The programs are dedicated to holistic formation, with a graduate degree and/or teaching credentials as a terminal goal, but with each teacher's religious formation and conversion to a model of living and teaching steeped in community bearing equal weight.

Catholic schools play an "irreplaceable" role in the evangelization of the United States, and require the cooperation of all those involved. "The duty of

Table 1

UCCE Program Statistics

Program	Host University	Year affiliated with UCCE	Established (year of 1 st cohort)	States	(Arch) Dioceses	Schools Elem/HS	Members for 2008-2009			Graduated Cohorts	Program Graduates
							M	F	total		
ACE	University of Notre Dame	1999	1993	15	25	99	87	89	176	13	1,023
EPICS	Seton Hall University	1999	1999	1	5	16	7	15	22	8	173
GRACE	University of St. Thomas, Houston	2007	2008	1	1	6	3	3	6	0	0
Lalanne	University of Dayton	1999	1999	3	4	18	1	21	22	8	80
LANCE	Christian Brothers University	2003	2003	1	1	8	3	8	11	4	19
LEAPS	Valparaiso University	2000	2001	2	2	8	5	5	10	6	65
LU-CHOICE	Loyola University of Chicago	2003	2003	1	1	7	3	9	12	4	42
LUMEN	University of Great Falls	2005	2005	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
Magis Catholic Teacher Corps	Creighton University	2001	2002	2	4	14	8	11	19	5	21
Operation TEACH	College of Notre Dame, Baltimore	2000	2001	1	1	16	1	20	21	6	43
PACE	University of Portland	1999	1998	3	4	8	3	9	12	9	56
PACT	Providence College	2000	2001	2	5	21	13	28	41	6	102
PLACE Corps	Loyola Marymount University	2000	2001	1	1	27	10	43	53	6	125
Rennick Fellowship Program	Saint Mary's University of Winona	2007	1999	Data not available due to new affiliation of program with UCCE and rebuilding year.							
UCTC	Boston College	1999	1997	1	1	8	2	10	12	10	51
TOTALS	15			26	53	254	146	271	417	87	1,802

education of the young is an ecclesial responsibility shared by all members of the Body of Christ: bishops, teachers, parents and concerned lay leaders" (Miller, 2006, p. vi). The UCCE facilitates a national partnership, bringing Catholic universities in communication with one another about teacher formation for Catholic schools and the role of the university in supporting Catholic education. As illustrated throughout, this collaboration is a significant commitment for each member program. It provides a forum for new teachers,

university faculty and administrators, and (arch)diocesan and Catholic school officials to share ideas and information about Catholic education, and this effort witnesses to the power of partnership and entrepreneurial spirit in supporting the apostolate of Catholic education. UCCE programs share the same model, but the work of the consortium and its power to affect change moves beyond a shared paradigm of program pillars to a force for evangelization and mission.

The programs highlighted in this paper, though by no means exhaustive of the generosity and commitment to this mission at work, illustrate the desire of universities to support their UCCE programs as part and parcel of their mission and call to serve the Church. "Catholic universities have a special responsibility to assist Catholic schools by providing teacher training courses and programs serving this constituency" (Miller, 2006, p. 5) and UCCE host universities do not do this independently. Catholic schools, (arch)dioceses, universities, donors, and grantors are called to recognize their mutual dependence in providing a high-quality, truly Catholic education. Through the UCCE, participating universities express a special commitment to this collaboration by offering a program of formation in vocations to Catholic education and working in a spirit of mutuality with other stakeholders.

Data Collection

For this article, data are used to describe aspects of UCCE programs and the consortium as a whole. Data are historically gathered at the director's meeting during the annual summer conference of UCCE program staff and participants. This historical data include the number of participants and graduates, participating schools, (arch)dioceses and states, and more recently the undergraduate institutions of participants. For this paper, additional fields of inquiry were added and gathered via an online survey to identify what recent graduates chose to do after completion of the program and to describe the financial structures of programs. Testimony from program alumni was solicited from 13 graduates of six different programs (due to time constraints, only a small, random sample was used for this study). University administrators were interviewed in person or asked questions via e-mail to gather their views on the programs hosted at their universities. Data collected from interviews were reviewed and analyzed to find common themes amongst responses. Quantitative and qualitative survey responses were collated and analyzed to gain a better understanding of individual program practices and exceptions to the norm. Collected data were also shared with the UCCE organization in an effort to inform and guide practice. In lieu of a separate results section, we

will incorporate findings from surveys and witness of participants and administrators as we give an in-depth description of the programs.

Throughout this article, the UCCE is spoken of as one unit and some generalizations are made about the UCCE and the way programs work. With 15 programs spread widely across the United States, there is much variation within the way programs operate and serve, but programs share enough similarities that universal descriptions and conclusions can be drawn. This diversity is a strength as UCCE programs grow and adapt to serve their constituencies and collaborate with local stakeholders.

The UCCE Impact

The impact of the UCCE can be broadly observed from its recognition nationally to its effect on individual participants. For example, in 2006, the UCCE was recognized for its efforts to impact Catholic education positively by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) when it received the C. Albert Koob Merit Award, which is given to an individual or an organization that "has made a significant contribution to Catholic education" (NCEA, 2006).

Since the establishment of the first ACE cohort in 1993, 2,219 teachers formed through the UCCE model have graduated from host universities. Though not all UCCE teachers stay in their placement schools following graduation, the majority remain in Catholic education, as illustrated by the data for 2006-2009 graduates' reported job placements 1 year after completing the program (see Table 2).

In 2007, in preparation for a presentation on the UCCE at the annual NCEA conference, graduating teachers were surveyed to address why some were choosing the move to public or charter schools; the answers were not surprising. This presentation stated that "dedicated teachers are trying to balance salaries in staying at their schools with significant expenses. This specific struggle is primarily affecting UCCE graduates in urban areas, like Boston and Chicago" (Boyle, Guerra, Keller, & Rickbeil, 2007). Some UCCE graduates do address this reality by choosing to live in community after graduation, sharing expenses and their resources. Though the UCCE has a high success rate of encouraging teachers to stay in Catholic schools, we anticipate the percentage of teachers remaining in Catholic education would decline greatly if a survey were extended to graduates 5 or more years out of their programs when they are trying to support families and futures. This phenomena is not specific to UCCE graduates in the workforce and cannot be solved by the UCCE or its model, but rather is an invitation to collaboration:

Table 2

UCCE Reported Graduation Placements 1 Year Post-Graduation (N = 439)

Placement	Number of Graduates	Percentage of Graduates
Graduates staying in their UCCE placement schools at least 1 year after graduation	206	47%
Graduates moving to other Catholic schools	104	24%
Graduates moving to public/charter schools	97	22%
Graduates entering religious life	7	2%
Graduates leaving teaching for other graduate studies	11	3%
Graduates leaving teaching for jobs in Catholic education (development, in UCCE programs)	7	2%
None of the above	6	1%

Note. Data from 11 programs' 2006-2009 graduates are reported here.

Our total Catholic community must increase efforts to address the financial needs of our Catholic school administrators, teachers, and staff. Many of our employees make great sacrifices to work in Catholic schools. The Catholic community must not ignore the reality of inadequate salaries, which often require the individuals to seek supplemental employment to meet living expenses and expenses due to limited or non-existent healthcare and retirement benefits... Catholic social teaching on the provision of just wages and benefits is both strong and clear. It is our community's responsibility to take action to address these issues now. (USCCB, 2005, p. 11)

Miller (2006) speaks of hiring Catholics who are "committed to the Church and living her sacramental life" (p. 55). Though not all UCCE teachers are Catholic, the vast majority are and all come to UCCE programs with the understanding that the life of the Church is central to the mission of the programs. UCCE directors are missioned to recruit participants at Catholic colleges and universities across the United States. Adding to the Catholic critical mass at elementary and secondary schools is certainly a service to the schools and the host universities. Many UCCE programs have experienced graduates choosing the novitiate directly after graduation (11 between 2006 and 2009). Though this is not a goal of the programs, it speaks to the formation element of the UCCE and its impact on those who feel called to religious life. As one graduate from the Magis Catholic Teacher Corps program at Creighton University wrote:

My time as a Magis teacher will help me transition into a monastic life. Whether it is simply lightening up and not considering myself to be so important, or the many ways the Jesuit charisms have informed and formed me, Magis Catholic Teacher Corps has been a major component in my discernment towards St. Benedict's Abbey.

Enthusiastic, dedicated, and mission-oriented people are leaven in any setting, and the faith orientation of UCCE teachers toward their vocations as Catholics has a ripple effect on their school communities. Most Rev. William Dendinger, the Bishop of the Diocese of Grand Island, Nebraska, described this Catholic vocation in their UCCE teachers:

We are blessed to have two Magis teachers this year at St. Patrick's School in North Platte [Nebraska]. They are positive, enthusiastic, and responsive to fellow teachers and the students. They are committed to their Catholic faith and are excellent role models for our students, their fellow teachers and parents. ("Proposed Creighton Institute," 2009, p. 35)

Nurturing the vocations of UCCE participants is not limited to work done within each program. One initiative of the UCCE is the annual summer conference attended by both program staff and a small number of UCCE program participants. This conference is held every July at a UCCE program host university. The UCCE summer conference began as an organic gathering for program staff members to come together and discuss issues of common concern and learn from one another. Over the past decade, it has developed into a more organized conference as the UCCE has explored more joint initiatives, welcomed more programs into the organization, and attempted to expose participants to the bigger movement that is the UCCE. In recent years, this has included more professional and spiritual growth opportunities for participants attending the conference, which they bring home to share with their programs and in their schools. At this point, only a small number of UCCE participants are able to attend the UCCE summer conference (20 out of 417 for 2008) due to budget constraints for most programs. Yet, the impact it has on those able to attend is profound, as described by a 2008 UCCE conference participant who stated, "the best part of attending...was seeing that our program is only a small part of a much bigger picture. Sure, I knew that in theory before I attended, but now I have names, faces, feelings and ideas to associate and better understand."

A LU-CHOICE alumna of Loyola University Chicago and former conference attendee, who attended from 2006 to 2008, believes summer conference

had a formative impact on her vision of Catholic education. She spent 2 years teaching at Red Cloud Indian School on the Pine Ridge Reservation following her UCCE commitment and says:

I desire, and have desired since attending my first UCCE conference, to be part of a solution to support and work for Catholic schools in our country. From my experience attending the conference and hearing about Catholic schools, especially in under resourced areas, my heart is drawn to the encouraging work that is happening already.

While the impact of the UCCE can be seen quantitatively by number of alumni produced in Table 1, it might also be measured by the lasting effect it has had on its own participants as described in personal testimonies throughout this article. A more thorough description and analysis of the UCCE model and its effect on young Catholic educators in formation helps to demonstrate the effectiveness of the work of the consortium.

The Effectiveness of the UCCE Model

As part of the 2008 Carnegie Conversation on Catholic Education, Shane Martin, dean of the School of Education at Loyola Marymount University, stated that "in order to meet the challenges of fulfilling the role envisioned by the bishops, Catholic higher education must be innovative and entrepreneurial in its approach to preparing teachers and principals" (Staud, 2008, p. 24). Many Catholic schools are experiencing difficulty retaining their teachers, especially Catholic schools in inner-city and rural areas (O'Keefe et al., 2004; O'Keefe & Scheopner, 2009). Using Miller's principal features of a Catholic school as a guide, the following sections illustrate the effectiveness of the UCCE model as a response to the challenge set forth by the bishops in 2005 to "work to address the critical staffing needs of our Catholic elementary and secondary schools" (USCCB, 2005, p. 14). While the goal of the UCCE is to support K-12 Catholic education in the United States, the process for doing so is in essence to instruct and form Catholic educators just as these educators work to instruct and form their K-12 students. The integral components of a K-12 Catholic school, described by Miller (2006) as "inspired by a supernatural vision, founded on a Christian anthropology, animated by communion and community, imbued with a Catholic worldview through its curriculum and sustained by Gospel witness" (p. 17), are also integral to the education of Catholic teachers under the UCCE model, as illustrated below.

Inspired by a Supernatural Vision, Founded on a Christian Anthropology

The Church asserts that the Catholic school

prepares its pupils to contribute effectively to the welfare of the world of men and to work for the extension of the kingdom of God, so that by living an exemplary and apostolic life they may be, as it were, a saving leaven in the community. (Vatican Council II, 1965b, p. 8)

The work of the Catholic school teacher must be grounded in this vision that is based on the dignity and purpose of human beings in an "atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity based on the Gospel" (p. 8), keeping in mind that it depends chiefly on him or her as to whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose. To achieve these ends, Catholic school teachers must be prepared not just for the inculcation of content, but for the building of Christian community and forever to desire growth in his or her understanding of the Church in the world and openness to the movement of the Spirit. UCCE programs are founded on these beliefs at the core of our Christian faith and rest on the conviction that formation for the vocation of a Catholic educator should extend beyond the university classroom or the field experience to imbue teachers with a sense of their vocations. For this reason, all UCCE programs are built on the three pillars of education/professional development, community, and spirituality. As shared by a recent Magis Catholic Teacher Corps participant:

I used to see the pillars as separate components of the Magis program. I knew we took classes and taught. I knew we would live together and go on retreats. Now I see that these pillars are all dependent on one another. You cannot have education without a sense of community, and spiritual growth is a necessary part of this community as well as the life of the teacher. Magis brought these areas of my life together that I treated as separate before and I feel my life is richer because of this.

For additional formation, UCCE teachers serve in a diverse array of Catholic schools in an effort to provide them with an understanding of the diverse needs of the human person. The programs exercise a preferential option for the poor in choosing to send teachers to under resourced schools, including urban Catholic schools, small schools in rural communities, and Catholic schools on American Indian reservations. UCCE teachers also serve in middle class parish schools and healthy and sustainable Catholic elementary and

secondary schools desiring teachers formed by the pillars. In their communities, on retreats, and at the UCCE summer conference, teachers share their stories of love and mission to enrich one another in the experiences of this diversity. The imitation of Christ is a common locus of inspiration for each teacher in his or her own context. This joint purpose, with the larger Church and human community, and within UCCE programs, animates the work of all involved in this enterprise.

Animated by Communion and Community

According to Miller (2006), "the Holy See describes the school as a community in four areas: the teamwork among all those involved; the cooperation between educators and bishops; the interaction of students with teachers; and the school's physical environment" (p. 29). More than a community of persons, the Catholic school is a community of faith. Though the Church describes the community dimension as "primarily a theological concept rather than a sociological category," UCCE teachers and programs experience community very directly through their extensive layers of sponsorship and support.

Teamwork among all those involved. Universities, donors, grantors, and schools/(arch)dioceses are collaborating financially to fund UCCE programs in serving regional Catholic schools. Differences exist because of local realities, such as what schools are able to give, what donors are prepared to do, and what universities have in place by way of support for Catholic schools. Table 3 shows the variety in how a small sample of UCCE programs are financially supported and clearly offers evidence that collaboration and partnership are necessary in each venture. Some UCCE programs rely on funding through their participation in federally funded programs or through privately funded grants, while others rely heavily on funding received directly from generous private benefactors. All reporting programs also receive significant funding from both their sponsoring universities and the (arch)dioceses in which they serve. The university assistance category includes tuition remission, salary assistance for administrative positions, and summer housing. The support from schools/(arch)dioceses includes direct payments from schools in which teachers are placed, as well as direct funding from (arch)dioceses, which may include covering part or all of housing or medical care coverage for program participants. These numbers show that UCCE programs are, in practice, a financial partnership between Catholic colleges and universities, (arch)dioceses, and K-12 Catholic schools.

Table 3

Funding Structure for 4 UCCE Programs

UCCE Program	Host University	# of teachers 08-09	University Assistance	Grants	Private Donors	Support from Schools/(Arch) Dioceses
UCTC	Boston College	12	51%	0%	27%	22%
Magis Catholic Teacher Corps	Creighton University	19	34%	0%	10%	56%
PLACE Corps	Loyola Marymount University	53	31%	16%	5%	48%
LU-CHOICE	Loyola University of Chicago	12	15%	46%	13%	26%

In theory and in practice, UCCE programs are jointly sponsored by universities and diocesan Catholic schools in matters that are not explicitly financial. The UCTC program of Boston College and the Archdiocese of Boston, for example, receives not only full tuition remission for UCTC students and budget shortages when necessary, but the university also provides meeting and office space, technology support, counseling services, ministerial services, and consulting for legal, financial, physical plant, and police services. The UCTC also receives financial support directly from the Archdiocese of Boston, which funds medical and dental benefits for UCTC participants. Though not always financial, many UCCE programs rely on (arch)diocesan officials for assistance in matching UCCE candidates with appropriate teaching placements, providing spiritual direction and leadership to local UCCE communities, and acting as landlords for UCCE teachers housed in former rectories and convents. Additionally, these key stakeholders support teachers through their presence at Commissioning Masses, graduations, and other community celebrations. UCCE teachers are also assigned mentor teachers at their placement schools who frequently play important roles in teacher induction.

Though UCCE programs are typically housed in teacher education departments or schools of education, there are some programs that receive additional assistance due to their positions within centers or institutes committed specifically to Catholic education. UCTC, LU-CHOICE, and Lalanne at the University of Dayton are all located within such centers at their respective universities and Creighton and Loyola Marymount are in the process of creating similar centers to house broader initiatives in Catholic education, reaching beyond the UCCE to participate in structural change, research, and additional support to regional Catholic schools. The University of Notre Dame's ACE

program is testimony for the success of this approach, with the original ACE Service Through Teaching Program working with other initiatives to support and foster the future of Catholic education in the United States.

Cooperation between educators and bishops. The cooperation between (arch)dioceses, through Church and Catholic school leaders and the host universities, is a necessary facet of UCCE programs that feeds each entity. The work of a UCCE program is bolstered when a positive and effective working relationship exists with leaders in the local (arch)diocesan school community. This has been affirmed by Shane Martin, who describes the relationship between the PLACE Corps and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as a "partnership" (Staud, 2008, p. 24). Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, S.J., dean of the Lynch School of Education at Boston College, also attests to the positive effects of university and (arch)diocesan collaboration:

The UCTC has been a rejuvenating, encouraging partnership between Boston College and the Archdiocese of Boston...It is clear that while the relationship between Boston College and the Archdiocese has had periods of strength and weakness over the past 10 years, the UCTC has clearly brought Boston College and the Archdiocese closer together and supported a consistent, strong, positive relationship.

Creighton's work with the Archdiocese of Omaha to serve Catholic schools has also been enlivened through Magis Catholic Teacher Corps, both for the university and the Archdiocese. Monetary support is a part of this relationship, but the realizing of mission is its lifeblood, as illustrated through the statements of Creighton's president, Rev. John Schlegel, S.J.:

Without a doubt the UCCE program has strengthened our ties with the Archdiocese of Omaha, but also with other dioceses such as Grand Island and Rapid City. The program provides Catholic educated teachers for the parochial schools and illuminates Creighton's unique role of serving the local church. With over 130 years of serving the local church, our Magis program is the most recent venture to keep this relationship vibrant and purposeful. A Jesuit university, by definition, is of the Church and of service to the Church.

Bishops and central Catholic schools office staff can also attest to the rewards of partnering with UCCE programs and their sponsoring universities. Most Rev. Eldon Francis Curtiss, Archbishop Emeritus of Omaha, comments: "Creighton's initiatives for K-12 Catholic schools are a tremendous service

to the Church as they provide resources, expertise, and support that are essential for our Catholic schools to flourish in the future" ("Proposed Creighton Institute," 2009, p. 35). Additionally, most UCCE programs have advisory boards which meet regularly and serve to offer guidance to the UCCE program director. Boards are often comprised of staff from the sponsoring university, (arch)diocesan officials, K-12 schools that participate as partners with the UCCE program, private donors, and a variety of other members of the community who commit to offering their energy and expertise to sustain the UCCE program.

Interaction of students with teachers. An important benefit of the UCCE model is that members find a plethora of support available through UCCE program staff, mentoring relationships in their schools, faculty and staff in the education department as well as other places on campus, and community mates who are walking a similar journey. A recent Magis Catholic Teacher Corps participant shared how this support had an important impact on his experience as a new teacher:

Being both a teacher and an education student places unique strains on a young professional. On one hand, I am blessed to have a vast array of resources and support people to fall back on. On the other hand, I often need these very same people because my education "toolbox" is still being filled.

The intentional support offered UCCE teachers by their own teacher education professors and UCCE staff members contributes to their success not only during their 2 years in the program, but during their entire induction period and beyond. The interaction of teacher and student also happens through the living witness of administrators, religious, faculty, and staff at the host universities. The availability of these people is instrumental and creates a ripple effect, testifying about their own experiences and faith lives to UCCE teachers who then take that confidence to their students and school communities. A LU-CHOICE alumna reflected:

Before LU-CHOICE and my 2 years at St. Frances of Rome School, I was always a bit hesitant about sharing my faith with my students and even simply talking about God and Jesus, even though I had worked in a Catholic school prior to that. I prayed a lot during those 2 years and I was inspired by the strong Catholic identity of my school. My program director was an example of someone who integrated Ignatian Spirituality into his everyday life, and that was powerful for me to see the connection between his words and his actions. I think

back to my second year of LU-CHOICE when sharing my faith with my students was just so simple and natural, and yet exciting and powerful at the same time.

UCCE directors are lay and religious, some near retirement and some 1 or 2 years out of a UCCE program. Their common thread is dedication to the programs as places of formation for teachers. As expressed below by a participant from the UCTC program, directors are instrumental in encouraging teachers to become bold witnesses of love in the world:

I had no experience with the Jesuits before UCTC. I went to a public university for undergrad. Coming to BC [Boston College], our director really helped us to appreciate St. Ignatius and Ignatian Spirituality from day 1, when she gave us BC's "little red book" filled with Jesuit quotes and prayers. She has consistently used the Examen with us on retreats, as well as Ignatian discernment.

Each university utilizes the traditions of its founding order to help members recognize God in the world and continually respond to the call to teach as Christ taught. The Jesuit charism of Creighton University and Magis Catholic Teacher Corps had a particularly strong effect on some members, who cite practices of daily praying of the Examen of Consciousness, direction through the nineteenth annotation of the Spiritual Exercises, and learning about what it means to be an Ignatian educator as integral to their formation as a Catholic educator. As shared by a Magis participant:

For me, participation in Magis has illuminated the eponymous charism in a way I couldn't have expected. I joined Magis because I wanted to give more for Christ and for others, but having never really committed myself to that before, I didn't know what it would be like or "look" like. Through my participation in the program, I now truly understand what it means to give more for Christ and others, as through the program I've given of myself more than I ever thought possible.

Continually calling teachers back to reflection offers them a model of keeping Christ at the center of their teaching experience, a powerful witness to their students. A Magis teacher on an American Indian Reservation relates his recognition of this during a sweat (a Lakota prayer ceremony) with students:

In the midst of my prayer in the sweat, the solution to a great deal of my teaching stress struck me. Suddenly I realized no matter how much preparation I completed or how many variables I took into account, the academic side of teaching only took me half way to being the kind of teacher I decided to be. The other

50% of teaching pertained to loving my students. By deciding I needed to love my students every day, I also found a renewed desire to love myself and to engage in some more serious prayer.

Physical environment. Intentional Christian community living is countercultural. In light of the "extreme individualism and the divorce of faith from ordinary family and social life," the commitment to live as brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing a common orientation toward mission and serving others, is a radical opportunity to live the "primary way God prepares us to participate in divine life" (Sofield, Hammett, & Juliano, 1998, p. 13)—in community. Though UCCE teachers do not take formal vows, and make only a 2-year commitment to living in their teacher community, their dedication to growth and prayer with one another is dynamic. Many UCCE teachers live in (arch)diocesan properties that used to be filled with teaching sisters, brothers, and fathers, and sharing that physical space with this rich heritage of Catholic education as service to the Church is a meaningful setting during the 2 years in the program. Of course there are many members with different ideas about how community is lived. UCCE directors have found the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1993) to ring true: "Those who love their dream of a Christian community more than the Christian community itself become destroyers of that Christian community even though their personal intentions may be ever so honest, earnest, and sacrificial" (p. 9).

UCCE teachers are a microcosm of the Church today. From the authors' experiences of their own applicants and participants, as well as participants at summer conferences, many are well formed in the doctrine of the faith and traditional devotions, and possess an evangelical zeal. Many are dangerously altruistic, lovers of Catholic social teaching, who have come to serve and love the poor as their primary mission. Some have rich prayer lives nourished by Catholic undergraduate and K-12 institutions and faith-filled families. Others have a vague understanding of faith and dry or absent devotional lives, and they come to the consortium programs desiring growth. Inevitably, the extremes of this spectrum live together in community. As one might infer, this requires openness to growth on the part of each member of the community, and it requires that program directors teach and reteach community throughout the program.

UCCE members live in intentional Christian communities in order to share household responsibilities, support one another, and pray together. Communities become powerful centers of growth through simple living, support, and encouragement. One participant explains that her "community gave [her] the strength [she] needed to go back in to school the next morning and

start over, even after the hardest days." The experience of community informs their understanding of school and classroom community in turn, offering each teacher the opportunity to grow in his or her understanding of the Christian call to love one another. A UCCE participant illustrates this movement in describing the significance of the community living experience:

The community provides hope. Ideas are exchanged and efforts are encouraged. Wisdom is shared from a different perspective. A wide range of talents are represented when we join together in one space. Being a part of an intentional Christian community means sharing wisdom, expertise, and empathy. If I can practice empathy within my Magis community, I will be better for my students. Community does not just mean a place to live while you are taking classes. It does not mean spending all your free time together or having all the same interests. I have found community to be the most valuable when it is a genuine collection of people who care for each other. This is the type of model I would like to follow for my classroom community also.

UCCE teachers often choose to continue living in intentional communities after their 2-year commitment to the consortium programs. Groups of participants from the Lalanne program, the LU-CHOICE program, and the PLACE Corps program, amongst others, have chosen to live together in intentional community after completing their respective programs, which has helped these alumni to be able to continue to serve in urban schools that pay lower salaries. These alumni cited additional benefits of living with others that share their values and providing continued support after the formal support of being in the program comes to an end. Testament follows from an alumna of the Lalanne program:

I feel one thing Catholic schools are lacking in this era is the presence of religious communities in their schools. I am called to be a lay person in the Church, but intentional community was a way to bring the benefits of religious life back into my personal discernment and the school in which I worked. Specifically, it kept us on a strong personal and communal prayer schedule, created a space for countercultural conversation, and devalued money in our home and personal life. Intentional community created the family support I needed to stay connected to the Church and grounded in the Gospel.

The physical environment of living in intentional Christian community has a profound impact on UCCE program participants. UCCE program directors report that the community living portion of their program is one of the

biggest factors indicated during the interview process as to why applicants chose to look into the UCCE experience as opposed to other teacher education programs, and this is often cited in exit surveys as an integral part of formation during program participation.

Imbued with a Catholic Worldview Throughout Its Curriculum

Archbishop Miller (2006) states that a “distinctive characteristic of Catholic schools is that the ‘spirit of Catholicism’ should permeate the entire curriculum” (p. 42). UCCE programs take this as a starting point, both in course work and in focus on the spirituality pillar. To prepare lay educators for this apostolate, the Church calls universities and scholars to cooperation so that members of the laity receive more in the way of theological formation (Vatican Council II, 1965a).

UCCE members complete graduate course work at their respective universities to develop their capabilities as competent Catholic educators. Type of degree earned and structure of course work differs across programs. Many programs incorporate some distance learning course work into their programs if they cover a wide geographic area. Nearly all programs conduct a majority of courses during the summer when member teachers are not serving full-time in schools. The impact of learning the art of teaching through participation in a UCCE program cannot be underestimated. In the words of a recent LU-CHOICE participant:

My knowledge of teaching has grown from knowing very little in terms of lesson planning, assessment, and curriculum to having a solid feel for those words with the completion of my first year. The growth I’ve accomplished in the area of educational knowledge can be attributed to the Loyola University Chicago graduate classes and the program’s baptism by fire approach; an approach that really immersed me fully within the educational atmosphere—my own classroom.

Coupling the responsibilities of serving as full-time teachers and completing a teacher preparation program is both demanding and rewarding. The opportunity to teach full-time during the program allows UCCE members to test and define who they are as educators during a time in which they have extensive extra support. This is evidenced by a recent UCTC participant who expressed:

My experience in UCTC served as a time for me to test out different styles of classroom management, learn how to teach a population of Haitian students that

I initially knew little about, and learn how to teach religion. I really grew as an educator during those 2 years, as I learned who I was in the Catholic school classroom and how I wanted to teach.

Many UCCE programs include in their graduate degree curriculum courses directed toward the formation of teachers expressly for Catholic schools. The number and types of Catholic education courses available to and required of UCCE program participants varies widely across programs. Magis program members at Creighton University, for example, take a substantial Catholic education course load with 9 hours of intentionally Catholic course work spread throughout the program (see Table 4). Though all programs are not able to provide this many courses due to a demand to cater to teachers interested primarily in public schools, similar courses are offered to UCCE participants as requirements and electives in most degree programs, and participants are encouraged to bring their experiences in Catholic schools into the university course work, and naturally bring their course work into the Catholic school classroom.

Additionally, as UCCE programs are located primarily at Catholic universities they are enriched and informed by their Catholic environments. Acknowledgement of the presence of God in all places and things through course work and prayer throughout the academic program forms teachers to take the same into their classrooms. The holistic approach strengthens the mission of the university by living the fullness of each institution's identity. Rcv. John Schlegel, S.J., expresses this connection: "We educate students to think critically and to enrich and renew society through professional dedication, responsible leadership, and committed citizenship. Our Magis program does all of those things, animated by the Jesuit spirit of generosity and service." Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, S.J., also sees a leavening effect on the Boston College community: "I believe that having UCTC participants in our classes enriches all of our graduate programs. The goals and ideals of the UCTC mutually enhance the goals and ideas of both the Lynch School of Education and the Center for Catholic Education." This is also witnessed by UCCE teachers such as this LU-CHOICE alumna:

I thoroughly believe that LU-CHOICE enhances the Ignatian identity of Loyola (Chicago). People at the university, on hearing what our program entailed, expressed admiration of our work and lifestyle. I would only hope that admiration may influence them in their own reflection and action in the world.

Table 4

Course Offerings for Magis Catholic Teacher Corps Participants at Creighton University

Course	Topics	Semester
EDU 680; The Spirituality of Teaching I (1 hr)	Christian community, the Jesuit charisms, ethics for Catholic educators, sacramentality	Summer 1
EDU 681; The Spirituality of Teaching II (1 hr)	Reflection of first year and revision of approach, the life of Ignatius and lessons for teachers, Ignatian Spirituality, leading prayer and reflection	Summer 2
EDU 520; Foundations of Catholic Education (3 hrs)	The history and philosophy of Catholic education	Summer 2
EDU 686; Practicum in Catholic Education I (1 hr)	Catholic school culture and evaluation, teacher leadership to strengthen Catholic school culture	Fall 1
EDU 687; Practicum in Catholic Education II (1 hr)	Living a faith that does justice, social analysis of different placements, promoting Catholic social teaching in schools	Spring 1
EDU 688; Internship in Catholic Education I (1 hr)	Faith leadership as a teacher leader, service learning projects, small grant writing for needs in Catholic schools	Fall 2
EDU 689; Internship in Catholic Education II (1 hr)	Portfolio assembly, professional presentation, integrating research in Catholic education with Magis experience	Spring 2

The curriculum of a UCCE program is not limited to formal course work in a classroom and includes programming toward the community and spirituality pillars. Programs have at least one extended retreat for participants each year, with most programs choosing a semiannual retreat and several days of reflection during the year. Some programs include faith sharing with local chaplains (religious and lay) combined with Mass and table fellowship. These moments of faith sharing in the community are often the tie that binds, causing the teachers truly to integrate what they are learning in their course work, placements, and personal journeys.

Sustained by Gospel Witness

"A final indicator of a school's authentic catholicity is the vital witness of its teachers and administrators" (Miller, 2006, p. 53). Miller rightly notes that "hypocrisy turns off today's students" and that if "teachers fail to model fidelity to the truth and virtuous behavior, then even the best of the curricula cannot successfully embody a Catholic school's distinctive ethos" (p. 58). As a result of their structure and dedication to the pillars, UCCE programs are designed to counter societal trends toward individualism and competition as

baselines for being in the world. Teachers, through their formation experience, grow in confidence as witnesses of the faith. Living in community and training in faith leadership encourages UCCE teachers to be open in sharing the faith and inviting others into community so that they can effectively witness to their students. The values of solidarity, living a faith that does justice, and accompanying others through daily life are communicated to those around them.

While the spirituality pillar encompasses a variety of aspects of the program, one activity that is shared by nearly all UCCE programs is a regular faith sharing meeting for intentional living communities. Members of UCCE programs gather weekly, monthly, or utilize creative solutions due to geographical or schedule issues in order to share witness about their faith, lives, and service. These "spirituality" gatherings take many forms and the majority are UCCE participant led and centered with resources provided by program staff. As described by a UCTC participant:

Our weekly spirituality gatherings are a time when we come together to share about our lives and experiences. We share prayer as well as our current thoughts and challenges. We rotate who facilitates the time every week and sometimes we have outside facilitators who bring in resources from the outside. A typical spirituality evening might consist of some sort of guided meditation or story around a theme followed by space to open and share. Participating in weekly spirituality gatherings with my community has improved my relationship with God, myself, and other people, both within my community and outside of it.

As mentioned previously, consortium directors, in collaboration with one another, can also be an inspiration to teachers in formation as they witness to the consortium's desire to share in an apostolic manner in the work of recruiting and forming teachers for Catholic schools. UCCE directors share in a national recruiting strategy that includes the distribution of UCCE literature by programs in their own recruiting, and directors often take this opportunity to build community and work with one another on the road, as illustrated below by Br. Edward Brink, current Assistant for Education for the Marianist Province of the United States:

During my time as director of Lalanne, I had the opportunity to join other directors at "recruiting fairs" sponsored by colleges and universities around the country. In order to save money, we soon found ways to help each other by sharing the cost of renting cars, alerting each other to cheap fares, and providing hospitality when people traveled to the city where we lived. While trying to cut

expenses might have been the beginning motivation, many of us soon began to understand that we could support each other in different and more meaningful ways. Sharing our common struggles, offering possible solutions, praying together when we met became the norm. We formed a community even though we were separated by many miles most days of the year.

Committee work within the consortium has accomplished website creation and maintenance, data collection, outreach, alumni and participant initiatives, income generation, and planning and coordination for 2 yearly meetings, all outside of the regular work of the directors, assistant directors, and administrative professionals that serve individual programs. The constitution of the UCCE states clearly that each program, regardless of size and influence, is one valued voice at the table. This allows for real appreciation of the gifts and needs each brings to the consortium. The election of officers and sharing of work through committees is structured to live this reality, with 2-year terms for leaders and regular sharing amongst committees, bringing each director and assistant director into leadership and contribution for UCCE initiatives.

Participants attending summer conference see that the interaction of program directors is one of camaraderie and loving assistance, defeating any ideas of a parochial mind-set of competition or domination. It is the prayer of the consortium leadership that this affects their view of how Catholic educators can collaborate, sharing nationally and locally when it makes financial and logistical sense while preserving the charisms and diversity of individual programs. As the consortium continues to grow, it is the hope of the authors that more young, Catholic educators are impacted by this collaboration through attending summer conference and interacting with consortium directors and members outside of their home programs.

Present Challenges and Directions for the Future

The UCCE has changed and adapted on local and national levels since its inception in 1999. What began as five programs, most in their infancy, has grown in one decade to 15 UCCE programs, most in a well-developed stage of operation. This has enabled the UCCE to evolve from a loose gathering of programs to an organization with common goals, a constitution, and a website. With gratitude to the University of Notre Dame and the ACE program for their strong and early leadership, the UCCE has begun the process of becoming a national movement in Catholic education. This growth and alignment has come with its own set of challenges, both within individual programs

and within the consortium, including the challenge of retaining teachers in Catholic schools after the program, providing support for teachers as they enter the classroom with little or no prior experience, depending on strong administrators and school communities, and having directors operate in multiple roles for program participants.

As mentioned above, it is not uncommon for under resourced placement schools to offer jobs to UCCE teachers after their commitments that they cannot afford to take. Though nearly all UCCE programs come at little to no cost to the participants, undergraduate loan payments and salary scales that cannot meet basic needs in cities with a high cost of living at times prevent graduates from committing to the mission that they have been living for the previous 2 years. Directors must communicate the realities of the financial challenges of placement schools while encouraging students to keep faithful to the UCCE mission after graduation. This is frustrating for schools, teachers, and directors, as all are committed to the formation of these teachers and are saddened to face their inability to continue in the mission. One UCCE graduate details her struggle in deciding whether she could afford to accept an offer to remain at her placement school:

When it came time to decide whether I was going to stay at this school or leave, it really came down, for me, to a numbers thing. I crunched the numbers, put together a budget and with the salary that would be offered at the school and with the cost that it takes to live in a city, it just wasn't working out. I had loans that I had to start repaying, and other bills and expenses and it just wasn't going to cut it. So in the end, I had to decide to leave the school. And, the school I'm at now is a public charter school and I'm very happy there and although I'm still living paycheck to paycheck. I'm just at least able to pay my bills, where it wasn't even a possibility if I had stayed at my old school. So I'm hopeful that through programs like the UCCE, we can get the word out. Hopefully Catholic schools can hire teachers and get them through these programs and then afford to keep them because it was such a great opportunity for me and I really have hope for the future of Catholic education through these programs.

One struggle every individual program faces is the fast preparation of teachers without certification and/or much experience in the classroom. Though secondary teachers are well prepared in their content areas, and most programs do not accept applicants with a grade point average lower than 3.0 in their undergraduate work, academic excellence is not preparation for sound classroom management. Summer programs last no more than 7 weeks and include course work in pedagogy and classroom management to prepare

teachers for the classroom in the fall. As any teacher educator can attest, this is enough for some teacher candidates, but not for all. Programs attend to this by supplying additional support in the classroom, some with as many as eight classroom observations by seasoned professionals in the first semester of teaching. When recruiting and interviewing applicants, directors inquire into an applicant's experience with children and use questions to measure each applicant's reaction to behavior management ideas and scenarios, but gaps inevitably exist once the teacher enters the classroom.

Many schools and dioceses have successful teacher induction processes that help fill gaps in UCCE teachers' knowledge of school systems, policies, and simple problems in the classroom. Mentor teachers, when assigned by the principal with an eye toward helping an energetic new teacher, are also invaluable in this context. Schools and dioceses with little to no induction process leave any new teacher, prepared through a traditional or an alternative program, alone and struggling in the classroom. UCCE directors have found that the best placements are in schools with administrators who are actively involved in the classrooms of their teachers and building a Catholic school culture, regardless of that school's financial health or demographic make up. Placement in a sound school with excellent parental involvement but weak administration may provide a less valuable first teaching experience than a placement in a struggling inner-city school with weak parental involvement but an engaged administrator modeling Christ the teacher and challenging staff to do the same. In examining placements, UCCE directors must make difficult decisions about where to send their new teachers, and the strength of the administrator weighs heavily in these choices.

In placing new teachers in schools, and then supporting them in the classroom and advocating for them when needed, UCCE directors often play roles that are contradictory in nature. One person cannot effectively be the authority figure, the field supervisor, the professor, the pastoral minister, the advocate, and the recruiter for a potential teacher, yet this is the reality for some UCCE directors. Crossing in and out of these roles can be confusing for young teachers and physically and emotionally exhausting for directors, especially as the directors must work within multiple schools and often multiple dioceses. Universities desiring to retain their UCCE directors solve this through appropriate staffing solutions, which can mean assistant directors, additional support people, and/or the engagement of multiple members of a department or school of education for training and mentoring teachers in the field. The struggle to staff appropriately is shared university-wide in many Catholic institutions, as well as Catholic schools, but the language of mission and dedication to Christ should not be stretched to promote workaholicism or

prevent a healthy family life for lay persons. Creative solutions in Catholic schools, like volunteer programs for retirees and parent engagement for extracurricular activities and athletics, are also applied in UCCE programs. In either setting, these approaches can inspire solutions but cannot substitute for paid and accountable professionals.

The funding for proper staffing is always the crux, and this is no different for the UCCE as a whole. The work the consortium engages in is funded by dues paid by each program, regardless of the number of teachers in that program. This money does not cover the cost of conferences and meetings, or the administration of the consortium's work. Leaders in the consortium dedicate many hours to initiatives, and most of the consortium's directors contribute significant time and energy through committee work. Additionally, the consortium engages its alums and current participants to help with recruiting, public relations, and marketing on a volunteer basis. The need to find funding to support some central planning and organization for the work of the consortium is being engaged by the consortium's Income Development Committee. Multiple paths and people collaborate to support UCCE programs at their host institutions and this model of collaboration will inspire any successful solution the UCCE finds to fund its future growth.

One option for future growth is raising interest at other Catholic colleges and universities that have the capacity to host and support a UCCE program from its inception and attracting funding to get new programs off the ground. The benefits of adding new programs would include not only increasing the total number of educators being formed in the UCCE model, but also being able to serve new geographical areas and enliven different colleges and universities through the benefits of hosting a UCCE program that serves the specific needs of local (arch)dioceses. An important role of the UCCE directors group in this process would be their guidance for new program staff in best practices and support through what can be difficult early years of program formation. Deans and bishops who currently work with existing programs can also be of service in expansion efforts by offering their own support and wisdom and sharing with potential host universities and benefactors about the benefits and challenges they have found in their relationship with the UCCE. Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, S.J., who was involved in the initial efforts to get the UCTC off the ground in Boston, offers the following advice:

Make it collaborative with the local diocese and other dioceses you will be serving in from the get-go. Engage education faculty early and often, giving them partial ownership of the program. Program leadership is crucial, most particularly someone who can model generosity and the pillars of the program and has

the ability to build bridges. Publicize and do everything you can to make the program known because this helps with fundraising.

Over the past decade, the UCCE has grown in its joint efforts to provide meaningful opportunities and engagement in Catholic education for program participants. Current efforts include offering professional development and personal growth experiences for participants who are able to attend summer conference, joining efforts for recruitment so that more interested undergraduate students are exposed to UCCE programs, and ensuring program participants feel a part of the "movement" that is the UCCE through a monthly newsletter and UCCE branded items. Future efforts should include offering opportunities for the increasing number of UCCE program alums so that they can stay connected to the movement as well as engaged in Catholic education. In working with the more than 2,200 program alumni, opportunities for leadership development abound. With proper funding, it would be both exciting and possible to expand the UCCE summer conference to encompass more current participants and program alumni. What limits these future possibilities is the small number of staff working with UCCE programs. Many programs have only one full-time staff member who exerts herculean efforts not only to offer appropriate mentorship and run their own programs, but to go a step further and engage in work on behalf of the entire UCCE. While the ideas are many, the hands and minds needed to bring these ideas to fruition are often exhausted by the work of running an individual program.

With over 400 participants actively participating in UCCE programs at any given time serving over 250 schools across the United States, the opportunities for research with this constituency are ripe. Further research about the efficacy of the UCCE model and vocational decisions of UCCE members is clearly needed. Opportunities to research Catholic school teacher induction and appropriate teacher preparation and sustenance could also be pursued.

Conclusion

The UCCE witnesses to the centrality of collaboration in successfully supporting Catholic teacher formation: nationally as a consortium, with host universities and a vast array of faculty and staff supporting their programs locally, with (arch)dioceses and Catholic school officials and teachers, with granting agencies and local donors, and most importantly with the new Catholic educators and their students in the classroom whose education and formation in the spirit of the Gospel justifies our existence.

When analyzed according to Archbishop Miller's marks of a truly Catholic school, the common model of teacher formation shared by all consortium programs coupled with the national collaboration and community built by the work of the consortium meets Archbishop Miller's bar. UCCE programs, through the integration of the three pillars, offer the opportunity for real transformation to their participants in the context of sharing the lessons of growth with their community mates and school communities. Including religious formation and deepening in understanding and practice of the faith, learning how to love and live in Christian community, and learning how to teach imitates the ideal for a Catholic school curriculum.

Testimony from UCCE alumni, university administrators, Catholic school officials and Church leaders, and the experience of UCCE directors demonstrates the effectiveness of Catholic universities working together to address needs in Catholic education. It also shows the importance of generous and open collaboration, valuing the voices and contributions of all at the table, regardless of size and influence. The work of teacher formation programs cannot end with graduation. The UCCE depends on individual (arch)dioceses and schools, along with their local Catholic colleges and universities, to devote time and resources to the pastoral care and continued formation of UCCE teachers. As the body of teachers formed in this innovative model continues to grow, so will their impact and presence, and our ability to continue with their formation and retention as part of our Catholic school community will ultimately determine our success in the work we have begun.

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